

# Anton LaVey

**Anton Szandor LaVey** (11 April 1930 – 29 October 1997), born **Howard Stanton Levey**, was a Jewish American occultist who was the founder of the Church of Satan organization and the religion of LaVeyan Satanism, with *The Satanic Bible* as the central text.

LaVey stated that LaVeyan Satanism was "*just Ayn Rand's philosophy, with ceremony and ritual added*". Other stated influences include Aleister Crowley and *Might Is Right* or *The Survival of the Fittest*, among many others. Much of *The Satanic Bible* has been described as plagiarizing others.

LaVey's estranged daughter Zeena Schreck, in an exposé about both her father's religion and past, attributes the birth of *The Satanic Bible* to a suggestion by the Jewish publisher Peter Mayer, who proposed that LaVey author a Satanic Bible to draw from the popularity of the 1968 horror film *Rosemary's Baby*, which had caused a recent rise in public interest in both Satanism and other occult practices.



Anton LaVey

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## Life

LaVey was born Howard Stanton Levey on 11 April 1930 in Chicago, Illinois and was raised in a secular Jewish household.<sup>[1]</sup> His father, Michael Joseph Levey (1903–1992), from Chicago, Illinois, married LaVey's mother, Gertrude Augusta née Coulton (1903–1984), born to a Jewish Russian father and mother, both of whom immigrated to Ohio in 1893 and became naturalized American citizens in 1900.<sup>[2]</sup>

Anton LaVey became a local celebrity in San Francisco through his paranormal research and live performances as an organist, including playing the Wurlitzer at the Lost Weekend cocktail lounge. He was also a publicly noticeable figure; he drove a coroner's van around town, and he walked his pet black leopard. He attracted many San Francisco notables to his parties. LaVey formed a group called the Order of the Trapezoid, which later evolved into the governing body of the Church of Satan.

LaVey began presenting Friday night lectures on the occult and rituals. A member of this circle suggested that he had the basis for a new religion. According to LaVey himself, on Walpurgisnacht, 30 April 1966, he ritualistically shaved his head, allegedly "in the tradition of ancient executioners", declared the founding of the Church of Satan and proclaimed 1966 as "the Year One", Anno Satanas, the first year of the Age of Satan. In 1969 he published the book *The Satanic Bible*. It is the central religious text of LaVeyan Satanism, and is considered the foundation of its philosophy and dogma.

In 1980 the FBI interviewed LaVey in connection with an alleged plot to murder Ted Kennedy. LaVey told the agents that most of the church's followers were "fanatics, cultists, and weirdos". The agents reported that LaVey's "interest in the Church of Satan is strictly from a monetary point of view," and that he spent "most of his time furnishing interviews, writing material, and lately has become interested in photography."<sup>[3]</sup>

LaVey's third and final companion was Blanche Barton. On 1 November 1993, Barton gave birth to Satan Xerxes Carnacki LaVey. Barton succeeded LaVey as the head of the Church after his death.

## Death

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Anton LaVey died on 29 October 1997, in St. Mary's Medical Center in San Francisco.<sup>[4]</sup> A secret Satanic funeral, attended by invitation only, was held in Colma.

## See also

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- Randian Objectivism

## References

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1. <https://archive.is/Pj7Wg>
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3. David Gambacorta (January 12, 2020). Satan, the FBI, the Mob—and the Forgotten Plot to Kill Ted Kennedy (<https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/01/12/fbi-satan-mobplot-kill-ted-kennedy-097180>). *Politico*.
4. Anton LaVey; Founded the Church of Satan (<https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1997-nov-08-mn-51538-story.html>)

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This page was last edited on 24 June 2023, at 22:54.